

**331.389 Mental health and disability services regions — criteria.**

1. *a.* Local access to mental health and disability services for adults shall be provided either by counties organized into a regional service system or by individual counties that are exempted as provided by [this subsection](#). The department of human services shall encourage counties to enter into a regional system when the regional approach is likely to increase the availability of services to residents of the state who need the services. It is the intent of the general assembly that the adult residents of this state should have access to needed mental health and disability services regardless of the location of their residence.

*b.* The director of human services shall exempt a county from being required to enter into a regional service system if the county furnishes evidence that the county complies with the requirements in [subsection 3](#), paragraphs “c”, “d”, “e”, and “f”, and is able to provide the core services required by law to the county’s residents in a manner that is as cost effective and with outcomes that are at least equal to what could be provided to the residents if the county would provide the services through a regional service system. The director shall identify criteria for evaluating the evidence provided by counties applying for the exemption. The criteria identified shall be specified in rule adopted by the state commission.

*c.* If a county has been exempted pursuant to [this subsection](#) from the requirement to enter into a regional service system, the county and the county’s board of supervisors shall fulfill all requirements under [this chapter](#) and [chapter 225C](#) for a regional service system, regional service system management plan, regional governing board, and regional administrator, and any other provisions applicable to a region of counties providing local mental health and disability services.

2. The director of human services shall approve any region meeting the requirements of [subsection 3](#). However, the director of human services, in consultation with the state commission, may grant a waiver from the requirement relating to the minimum number of counties if there is convincing evidence that compliance with such requirement is not workable.

3. Each county in the state shall participate in an approved mental health and disability services region, unless exempted pursuant to [subsection 1](#). A mental health and disability services region shall comply with all of the following requirements:

*a.* The counties comprising the region are contiguous except that a region may include a county that is not contiguous with any of the other counties in the region, if the county that is not contiguous has had a formal relationship for two years or longer with one or more of the other counties in the region for the provision of mental health and disability services.

*b.* The region has at least three counties.

*c.* The region has the capacity to provide required core services and perform required functions.

*d.* At least one community mental health center or a federally qualified health center with providers qualified to provide psychiatric services, either directly or through contractual arrangements with mental health professionals qualified to provide psychiatric services, is located within the region, has the capacity to provide outpatient services for the region, and is either under contract with the region or has provided documentation of intent to contract with the region to provide the services.

*e.* A hospital with an inpatient psychiatric unit or a state mental health institute is located in or within reasonably close proximity to the region, has the capability to provide inpatient services for the region, and is either under contract with the region or has provided documentation of intent to contract with the region to provide the services.

*f.* The regional administrator structure proposed for or utilized by the region has clear lines of accountability and the regional administrator functions as a lead agency utilizing shared county staff or other means of limiting administrative costs.

4. County formation of a mental health and disability services region is subject to all of the following:

*a.* On or before April 1, 2013, counties voluntarily participating in a region have complied with all of the following formation criteria:

(1) The counties forming the region have been identified and the board of supervisors of the counties have approved a written letter of intent to join together to form the region.

(2) The proposed region complies with the requirements in [subsection 3](#).

(3) The department provides written notice to the boards of supervisors of the counties identified for the region in the letter of intent that the counties have complied with the requirements in [subsection 3](#).

b. Upon compliance with the provisions of paragraph “a”, the participating counties are eligible for technical assistance provided by the department.

c. During the period of April 2, 2013, through July 1, 2013, the department shall work with any county that has not agreed to be part of a region in accordance with paragraph “a” and with the regions forming around the county to resolve issues preventing the county from joining a region. By July 1, 2013, a county that has not agreed to be part of a region in accordance with paragraph “a” shall be assigned by the department to a region, unless exempted pursuant to [subsection 1](#).

d. On or before December 31, 2013, all counties shall be part of a region that is in compliance with the provisions of paragraph “a” other than meeting the April 1, 2013, date.

e. On or before June 30, 2014, unless exempted pursuant to [subsection 1](#), all counties shall be in compliance with all of the following mental health and disability services region implementation criteria:

(1) The board of supervisors of each county participating in the region has voted to approve a [chapter 28E](#) agreement.

(2) The duly authorized representatives of all the counties participating in the region have signed the [chapter 28E](#) agreement that is in compliance with [section 331.390](#).

(3) The county board of supervisors’ or supervisors’ designee members and other members of the region’s governing board have been appointed in accordance with [section 331.390](#).

(4) Executive staff for the region’s regional administrator have been identified or engaged.

(5) An initial draft of a regional service management transition plan has been developed which identifies the steps to be taken by the region to do all of the following:

(a) Designate local access points for the disability services administered by the region.

(b) Designate the region’s targeted case manager providers funded by the medical assistance program.

(c) Identify the service provider network for the region.

(d) Define the service access and service authorization process to be utilized for the region.

(e) Identify the information technology and data management capacity to be employed to support regional functions.

(f) Establish business functions, funds accounting procedures, and other administrative processes.

(g) Comply with data reporting and other information technology requirements identified by the department.

(6) The department has approved the region’s [chapter 28E](#) agreement and the initial draft of the regional management transition plan.

f. If the department, in consultation with the state commission, determines that a region is in substantial compliance with the implementation criteria in paragraph “e” and has sufficient operating capacity to begin operations, the region may commence partial or full operations prior to July 2014.

5. If the department determines that a region or an exempted county is not adequately fulfilling the requirements under [this chapter](#) for a regional service system, the department shall address the region or county in the following order:

a. Require compliance with a corrective action plan.

b. Reduce the amount of the annual state funding provided for the regional service system, not to exceed fifteen percent of the amount.

c. Withdraw approval for the region or for the county exemption, as applicable.

[2012 Acts, ch 1120, §32, 37, 39; 2013 Acts, ch 140, §170, 186](#)

Referred to in [§222.2, §225.1, §225C.2, §226.1, §227.1, §229.1, §331.393, §331.910, §426B.3, §426B.5](#)